



PART TWO: ICNU // Jonah

//INTRODUCTION//

We are in week two of the series, “ICNU.” In this series we are looking at ICNU moments, where individuals discover what God saw in them, then empowered them to work to accomplish His plans and purposes. Sometimes though, these ICNU moments show us a weakness, a blind spot, or glaring sin. This week we will be looking at the story of Jonah and his ICNU moment. While this series is all about the great things and potential that God sees in us and wants us to see in ourselves, we also need to pause for a week and talk about the things God sees in us that get in the way of becoming who He wants us to be, and get in the way of us living out our God-given purposes.

//WEEKEND REWIND//

As you have had time to reflect and think about this past week’s message, what are the things that either challenged you or caused you to take action in your own life?

//WEEKLY REVIEW//

Read Genesis Jonah 3:10-4:11

In the passage we just read, Jonah is about to blow it big time because he gets angry and then doesn’t deal with his anger. Instead he chooses to continue to feed his anger. Jonah has an over developed sense of justice and only sees things in black and white. What we need to understand from this passage is that anger alone isn’t ungodly, but left unresolved, it’s destructive. Anger left unchecked will destroy what God wants to do in and through us.

1. Share a story or time when you were adamant that you were right and someone else was completely wrong and you went to great extents to make sure they knew they were wrong.

//DISCUSSION QUESTIONS//

2. Even if your anger is justified, you still have to deal with it. Talk about the effects and emotions unresolved anger can have on a person's life.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- **Unresolved anger puts me in the place of God:** Jonah acts like he knows better than God what should have been done about the Ninevites.
- **Unresolved anger blinds me to my own disobedience:** Jonah was trying to make excuses for his own disobedience by saying "I knew this would happen, so I was right in running from God in the first place.
- **Unresolved anger can make me lash out at God's goodness:** When we don't deal with our anger, we become bitter and we want everyone and everything around us to be as miserable as we feel.
- **Unresolved anger ultimately makes me hopeless:** Jonah is so angry that he has become desperate, and in his desperation is becoming hopeless.

3. What unresolved anger would God see in your life? What about other feelings?

SUGGESTED ANSWER:

- **Anger** is frequently a mask for other emotions. We may feel it's okay to be angry but it's not ok to feel other things, so we mask those other feelings with anger.

4. What are some practical steps you can take this week to begin to address any unresolved anger or unchecked emotions in your life?

SUGGESTED ANSWERS:

- **Think twice before judging others:** Jonah wanted to have a front-row seat to the destruction he thought the Ninevites deserved.
 - Do you have this same type of desire for someone in your life?
- **Beware of gratefully accepting God's grace while denying it to others:** As the hot sun is beating down on Jonah and he is sweltering, God is gracious to him and provides him some shade. Of course, Jonah is happy, but unfortunately, that kindness God extended to him doesn't reach Jonah's heart toward the Ninevites.
 - Do you extend the same grace given to you by God to others, even those you are angry at?
- **If I don't adjust my attitude, a "worm" may come and eat away my blessings:** God tries to reach Jonah with kindness (v. 6) and Jonah refuses to come around; God brings hardship to Jonah with a worm (v. 7-8) but Jonah just digs his heels in even more.
 - Is your unresolved anger causing you to miss what God is doing in your life?
- **Repentance or a hardened heart? The choice is yours:** God was challenging Jonah's elitism, his vengefulness, his hatefulfulness and spitefulness. But Jonah still wouldn't budge.
 - Where is God challenging you in your unresolved anger or unchecked emotions?

5. What kind of "ICNU" moment does God need to have with you this week?

//MOVING FORWARD//

God has been speaking to each of us as we've gone through Jonah's story. Some of us have seen ourselves in different parts of the story; others of us may be sympathetic to some of Jonah's responses. And if God hasn't shown you anything just in the course of hearing this story, spend some time over the next week pray through and asking yourself these questions:

God:

- What do you see in me that I need to deal with because it goes against your desire to bless everyone?
- What unresolved emotions are still swirling around in me?
- Who are my Ninevites?
- Where has grace failed to take hold in my life?

//CLOSING PRAYER//

Take time to pray together and for each other as a group. Also, if any one is struggling with unresolved anger pray that God gives them the courage and strength to begin the process of forgiveness.

//CHANGING YOUR MIND//

Psalms 139:23-24: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."